

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 00834 061155Z

54

ACTION NEA-09

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CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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R 061129Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2855

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 834

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, SY, JO

SUBJ: ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF JORDAN PRIMIN RIFAI'S VISIT TO SYRIA

1. SUMMARY: JORDAN EMBOFF INFORMED US THAT PRIMIN RIFAI SIGNED ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA WHICH PROVIDES FRAMEWORK FOR SYRIAN SHARING EUPHRATES DAM ELECTRICITY, JORDAN DEVELOPMENT OF YARMUK RIVER, SYRIAN SHARING OF DERA'A REGION DRINKING WATER, EXPANDING AND EXPEDITING JORDAN TRADE THROUGH LATAKIA VICE BEIRUT, AGREEMENT TO IMPROVE DAMASCUS-AMMAN RAILWAY, MEASURES TO IMPROVE SYRIAN-JORDANIAN TRADE, AND FORMATION OF JOINT COMMISSIONS TO IMPLEMENT DETAILS. BELIEVE AGREEMENT IS POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR BOTH COUNTRIES AND FURTHER EVIDENCE OF ASAD'S DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH ARAB REGIMES SUBMERGING PAST IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICTS. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MARCH 5 JORDANIAN FIRST SECRETARY DISCUSSED ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF PRIMIN RIFAI'S VISIT TO SYRIA  
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PAGE 02 DAMASC 00834 061155Z

WITH EMBOFFS. HE SAID THAT IN ACCEPTING LONG-STANDING

SARG INVITATION RECENTLY RENEWED BY KHADDAM IN AMMAN, JORDANIANS HAD AS A PRIMARY OBJECTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF SYRIAN-JORDANIAN ECONOMIC TIES AND UPDATING OLD ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS. HE POINTED OUT JORDANIAN DELEGATION INCLUDED MINNATIONAL ECONOMY, CHAIRMAN NATIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL AND DIRECTORS JORDAN'S WATER AND ELECTRIC AUTHORITIES AS WELL AS SEC GEN OF JORDANIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY.

3. AMONG PRINCIPAL ITEMS COVERED BY OVERALL ECONOMIC AGREEMENT SIGNED BY RIFAI AND AYYUBI WERE:  
(A) SYRIAN AGREEMENT SHARE EXCESX EUPHRATES DAM ELECTRICITY WITH NORTH JORDAN REGIONA; (B) SYRIAN WILLINGNESS APPROVE JORDAN'S YARMUK RIVER DEVELOPMENT PLANS; (C) SYRIAN AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE DRINKING WATER FOR NORTHERN JORDANIAN VILLAGES THROUGH DEVELOPMENT AND REHABILITATION DERA A REGION SPRINGS; (D) EXPANDING AND EXPEDITING JORDANIAN TRADE THRU LATAKIA VICE BEIRUT. THIS TRADE IS CURRENTLY SUBJECT TO NUMBER OF DICCICULTIES INCLUDING OFF-LOADING AND TRANSPORTATION DELAYS; (E) AGREEMENT TO IMPROVE DAMASCUS-AMMAN RAILWAY AS PART OF OVERALL IMPROVEMENT OF LATAKIA-AQABA TRANSIT ROUTE; (F) MEASURES TO BUILDUP SYRIAN-JORDANIAN TRADE, WHICH IS HEAVILY IN SYRIA'S FAVOR, INCLUDING ESTABLISHMENT MARKETING CENTERS INBOTH CAPITALS AND LIMITED INTEGRATION ECONOMIES THRU MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS TRADE AND ECONOMIC PLANNING; (G) AGREE-  
MENT TO FORM JOINT COMMISSION AND SUB-COMMISIONS HEADED BY RESPECTIVE MINS OF ECONOMY TO CONTINUE IMPLEMENTING DETAILS OF AGREEMENT REACHED.

4. SYRIAN PRESS REPORTED THAT RIFAI HAD VISITED EUPHRATES DAM. MARCH 4 PRESS PROMINENTLY NOTED THAT TWO PARTIES HAD SIGNED AGREEMENT ON PROGRAM LEADING TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS IN VARIOUS ECONOMIC FIELDS.

5. COMMENT: BELIEVE BOTH SIDES PLEASED WITH OUTCOME OF TALKS AND ATMOSPHERE OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION WHICH SURROUNDED THEM. SYRIAN READINESS TO WELCOME CLOSER  
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PAGE 03 DAMASC 00834 061155Z

COOPERATION IN JORDAN IS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF ASAD'S POLICY OF DEVELOPING COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH REGIMES PREVIOUSLY LABELLED NON-PROGRESSIVE AND PRO-IMPERIALIST. ON JORDANIAN SIDE, VISIT APPEARS TO HAVE REMOVED NUMBER OF PREVIOUS AND POTENTIAL OBSTACLES IN ITS TRANSIT TRADE AND TO ECONOMIC DEVELOP-  
MENT OF IRBID-RAMTHA REGION.  
MURPHY

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